



CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

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Falls Church City Manager Proposes FY 2008 Budget

*Supports Vision and Strategic Plan; invests in schools;
increases real estate and cigarette taxes*

FALLS CHURCH, VA. – Falls Church City Manager Wyatt Shields submitted to City Council a Fiscal Year 2008 Proposed Operating Budget and Capital Improvements Program that is balanced within revenue estimates and designed to prioritize resources in line with the City Council's Vision Statement and Strategic Plan. The 2008 fiscal year runs from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

The \$71 million FY 2008 proposed budget maintains the City's financial security and high-quality services. The budget portrays modest increases with a 3.0 percent increase in City government operating expenses over FY 2007 and a 5.2 percent increase in the transfer to schools over FY 2007.

The budget proposes a 1-cent real estate tax rate increase, raising the rate from \$1.01 to \$1.02 per hundred dollars of assessed value. This rate will generate revenue sufficient to fund the School Board's requested budget.

This budget also contains a proposed increase in the cigarette tax from 65 cents per pack to 70 cents, which is projected to generate \$40,000 in additional revenue.

In November 2006, the City Council adopted a Vision Statement describing the desired state of the City in the year 2025. City staff developed a Strategic Work Plan, currently under review by Council, to implement the principles of the Vision. The proposed budget was developed to meet community needs based on the Vision and Strategic Plan.

The proposed budget reduces payroll costs for upper management and redirects those funds to create five new positions that provide direct program support and customer service, including a Building Inspections Electrical Inspector, Environmental Services Civil Engineer, Recreation and Parks Maintenance Worker, Recreation and Parks Program Supervisor, and a Public Safety Parking Enforcement Officer.

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The proposed budget invests in a high performing work force by allocating \$100,000 for employee training and the development of performance benchmarks for all functions relating to water and sewer services. This reflects the Strategic Plan objective of cultivating a high performing workforce to serve the City.

The proposed budget provides \$120,000 in new funding for a comprehensive rewrite of City Zoning Codes. This reflects a Strategic Plan initiative for community preservation and economic development.

Funding of \$19,491 is provided for an annual household hazardous waste collection event as proposed in the City's Solid Waste Management Plan. The initiative will more effectively divert hazardous waste from entering the normal waste stream and provides a useful service to City residents who otherwise would dispose of hazardous waste at the Fairfax County disposal site.

The proposed budget calls for the continuation of the City's Green Fleet Program to replace new vehicles with hybrids.

The Water and Sewer Funds are balanced within estimated revenues with no rate change. The water rate will remain at \$3.03 per thousand gallons in FY 2008 and the sewer rate will remain at \$5.91 per thousand gallons. The budget includes capital expenditures of \$950,311 for the City's share of upgrades to the Arlington and Fairfax county wastewater treatment plants, as well as maintenance of existing facilities and pipes.

Copies of the proposed budget and capital improvements program are available at www.fallschurchva.gov; at the Mary Riley Styles Public Library (120 N. Virginia Avenue); and at the Office of Communications (City Hall, 300 Park Avenue, Suite 303, East Wing).

Budget work sessions and public hearings will be held until final budget adoption by Council at their April 23 regular meeting. Visit www.fallschurchva.gov to view the budget timeline.

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